

# Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club

## THE CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST JUNE 1976 NUMBER 3

President: Mr R. Bradfield

Secretary: Mrs R. Mills

Treasurer: Mr L. Bransgrove.

Monthly meetings are held at the Castlemaine Education Centre (SEC building, Mostyn Street) on the third Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m.

Visitors and prospective members are invited to attend the club's sessions.

### June Meeting June 16th

Speaker will be Mr R. Allen, President of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club. Subject: Insects.

### July Meeting July 21st

BHP nature films- Australian Marsupials, Dry Australia, Reef of Steel (wild-life in Bass Strait), Australia Plague Locust.

### August Meeting Aug 18th

Speaker: Mr R Wallace.  
Subject: Birds.

### ITEMS FROM THE COMMITTEE

News-sheet New rates at the Education Centre will halve the cost of printing. It is hoped that that a number of distribution points can be arranged.

A special annual issue is planned.

Club Emblem Mr Sitch will design possible club emblem. (The grass-tree emblem that has appeared on the news sheets is common to a number of natural history groups- we are investigating the possibility of obtaining grass tree car transfers).

Record Cards Cost of printing is rather high - other means of printing are being investigated.

### June Excursion Sunday 20 th.

Stony Creek. Route is via the Ridge Road to the Loddon River, to the Malmsbury Road and back through Glenluce. The road is reported to be in fairly good order - it is steep in parts. Leave Education Centre at 10.30 sharp. Leader: Mr Bradfield.

July Excursion Saturday 24th.  
Kalimna Point. Meet at the point at 2 p.m. Leader: Mr Perkins.

August Excursion August 8th  
Porcupine Ridge, with Ballarat F.N.C. Leader: Mr Perkins.

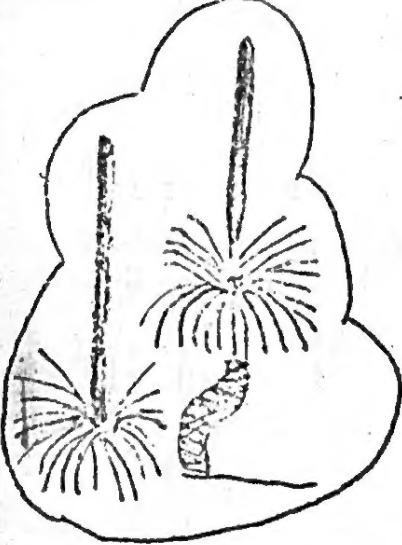
August Excursion Sat Aug 21  
Muckleford Forest: Shrub violet and ploughshare wattle. Leader: Mr Sitch.

Sept Excursion Sun Sept 12  
Elphinstone Ridge, Muckleford, Maldon (with Shepparton & Geelong SGAP). Leader: Mr Sitch.

Sept Excursion Sat Sept 18  
Unknown Miners-Grave Gully. Leader: Mrs Mills.

### CASTLEMAINE TECHNICAL SCHOOL

We have offered to assist the technical school with development of their nature reserve.



MEET THE BIRDS IN YOUR GARDEN - Ray Wallace

The White Plumed Honeyeater

The loud clear "chick-o-wee" announces the arrival of the Greenie, or, more correctly, the White-plumed Honey-eater. A neat little greyish-brown bird strongly tinged with olive green and underneath, a pale yellowish brown. His main distinguishing feature is the white plume behind each cheek.

Greenies should be welcomed where ever they choose to roam. Like a busy little soldier, Greenie is never still. He flits

from tree to tree, sampling nectar from the bells of the Correa (a favorite), harassing and bossing every other bird in the garden, singing loudly all the while.

In my own garden he is continually annoying his large cousin, the Red Wattle-bird. As eager to feed on insects as well as nectar, he is happy when he can find a cache of insects such as aphids to feast on. Out of a pink-flowered yellow gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon rosea*) in my garden, the Greenies show one of their prettiest habits, perching in the uppermost branches they will rise straight up into the air, wings working vigorously, singing loudly all the while to alight again and repeat the process over again.

Try to make the Greenie friends in your garden, you'll be glad you did.

(This article is reprinted from the Bendigo Group Society for Growing Australian Plants Newsletter. Ray is speaker at our August meeting)

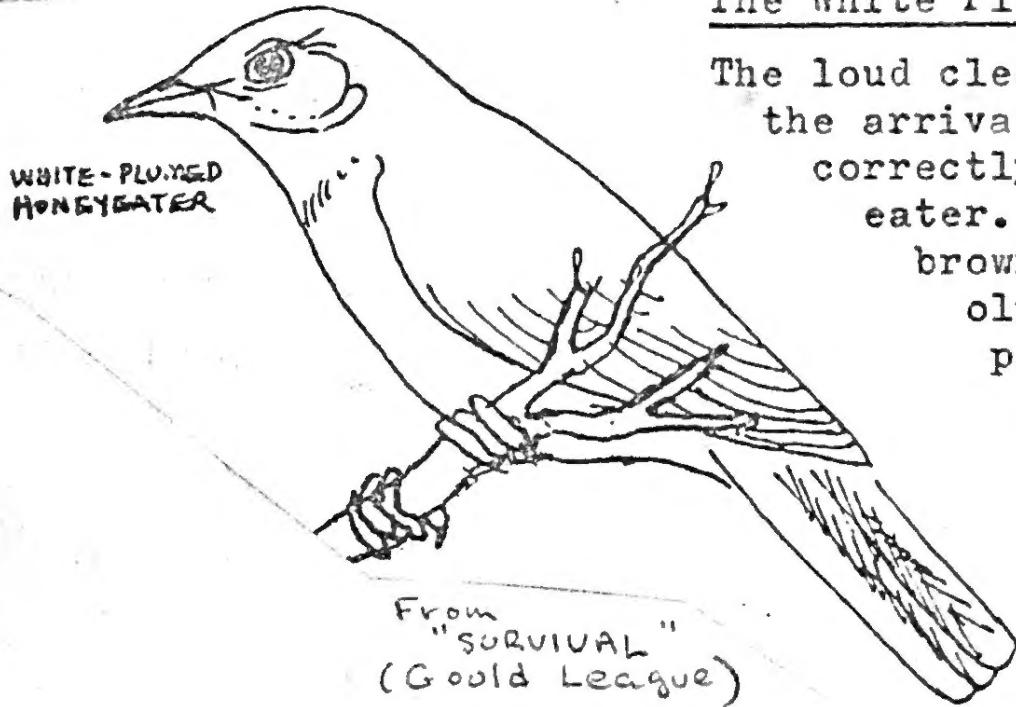
BOOK REVIEW "A Field Guide to Australian Birds" by Peter Slater, 2 volumes. Published by Ripley. Cost - about \$10 per volume.

Naming of the birds you see should be easy- obtain one of the many bird books and match the picture with the bird.

I find it much more difficult than it seems. Even if the bird is tame and easy to see the pictures and the real bird often do not seem to match at all.

The Slater Field Guides are the most helpful in this matching task. An example- the welcome swallow and fairy martin are two common birds found flying over the wet areas of the state -but how do we tell them apart?

One page of Slater shows paintings of all of the swallows and



3

similar birds in typical poses (as compared with artistic poses in some bird books). On the opposite page is a brief list of the main identification features

Welcome Swallow -rusty forehead and throat.

Fairy Martin -rusty head and nape; white rump.

Later in the book is a fuller description, with voice, habitat and range, and a distribution map; all of these can help to narrow the search.

Unfortunately there are two books to buy and carry around. Volume one is for the non-perching birds (the water birds, parrots, hawks etc) and volume two is for the perching birds.

#### OTHER NATURAL HISTORY GROUPS 1 The Maryborough Field Naturalists' Club

The club is well known in natural history circles, having formed almost 25 years ago. Meetings are on the first Monday of each month, at 7.30 in the Maryborough High School. Excursions are advertised in the local paper on the preceding Friday. President is Mr H. Beer and secretary is Mrs L. Courtney. Membership is 90 with 10 junior members.

I am sure that our members would be very welcome at their meetings. Program for the remainder of the year is

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <u>July 5</u> | Mr Brian Johns - Safari<br>around Australia.       |
| <u>Aug 2</u>  | Films  |
| <u>Sept 6</u> | 25th Birthday                                      |
| <u>Oct 4</u>  | Mr J. Clements - Fish-<br>eries & Wildlife Officer |
| <u>Nov 1</u>  | Members night.                                     |
| <u>Dec 6</u>  | Mr K. Stepnall-Author &<br>Photographer.           |

#### Excursions

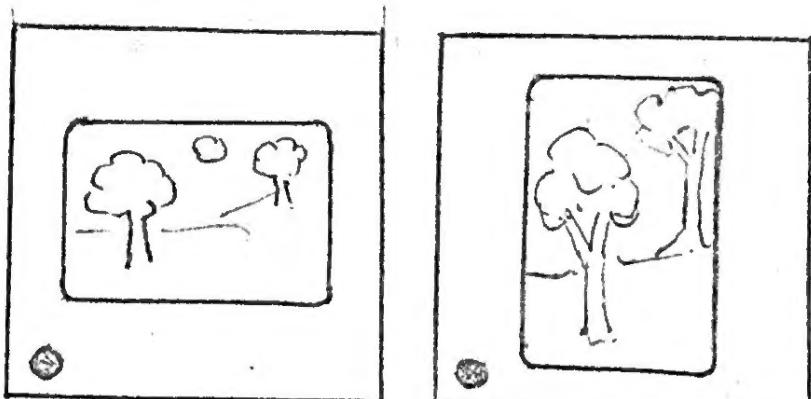
- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <u>July</u> | Boneseed eradication in<br>local bush       |
| <u>Aug</u>  | Wattle festival involvement                 |
| <u>Sept</u> | Local bush                                  |
| <u>Oct</u>  | Bell's swamp & Drummond                     |
| <u>Nov</u>  | Homebush Railway line <sup>bush</sup> area. |
| <u>Dec</u>  | Local bush.                                 |

#### SLIDE SHOWING- WHICH WAY UP?

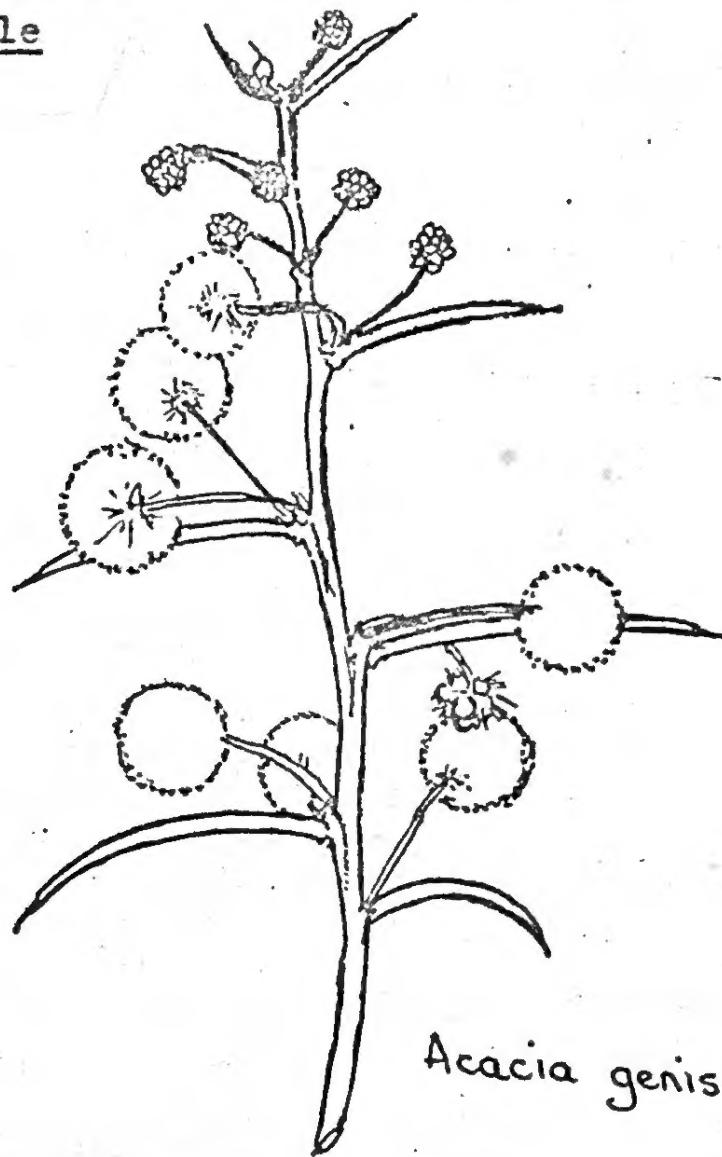
The general international convention is that slides be spotted on the lower left hand corner when held for correct viewing in the hand.

With most projectors, the slide is placed with the spot in the upper right hand corner.

All photographers are urged to follow this convention.



Correctly spotted slides

The Spreading Wattle

◇ - Ribs (4)  
Cross-section  
of phyllode.

Acacia genistifolia.

Acacia genistifolia (syn. *A. diffusa*)

An early flowering wattle which is easily recognised by its spreading, open habit. Long branches are densely covered with creamy-yellow flower heads from early autumn until spring. The penduncles (flower stalks) are in groups, shorter than the phyllode.

Usually growing from 1-1½ m. high, it may be dwarfed on hard, gravelly terrain.

One of the wattle group which has phyllodes in place of true leaves. These are stiff, narrow, and pointed, about 3-5 cm long, with the central nerve raised.

G. Sitch.